

Hist. of Swed. Denmark vol 2.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

REGARDING THE

PRESENT POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES

OF

THE KINGDOM OF SWEDEN.

DRAWN UP IN THE COURSE OF A TOUR MADE

ANNO 1786.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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GENERAL OBSERVATIONS, &c.

SECTION I.

Of the Situation of Sweden in regard to its Neighbours.

THE Monarchy of Sweden is much diminished in point of extent, compared to what it was a century ago. Russia possesses some of its most fertile provinces: others now belong to Prussia; and Bremen and Verden are annexed to Hanover. Norway, also, the Swedes lay claim to; and that kingdom still remains amongst the titles of the Swedish Crown. When the present King mounted the throne, particularly after he had freed himself from aristocratical fetters, he certainly had resolved to signalize his reign, by recovering some part of what his ancestors had lost. He put his army on the best footing his finan-

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ces would admit of, was perpetually forming camps, reviewing his troops, collecting ammunition and stores, and making every possible preparation for war. This naturally excited the jealousy of his neighbours, which was not a little heightened by some imprudent speeches, which he either actually made himself, or which were made for him. For instance, when Russia was at war with the Turks, " That he would certainly pay a visit to his neighbour the Empress, at Peterburgh, and would carry with him " 30,000 friends to insure a cordial reception." The Danes, and even the Russians, (though the latter will not confess it), are not a little afraid of the warlike spirit and character of the Swedes. In particular, during the late Turkish war, Russia was very apprehensive of an attack. It suspected, with some reason, that the Swedes secretly fomented and encouraged Pugatchef's rebellion : 40,000 Russians were therefore sent into Finland, and large bodies of troops into Livonia, as the Livonians (particularly since all their old privileges and rights were abolished) have betrayed a strong inclination to return again under the Swedish government. Hence also the new fortifications in the neighbourhood of Riga. But as the Danes and Russians would probably unite in a joint attack upon Sweden, should it make the smallest movement, the Swedes see the necessity of lying by for the present, and of watching for some favourable opportunity of acting to advantage.

One thing both the King and the people of Sweden are very anxious to get rid of, and that is the payment of the Sound duties. But they know that cannot be effected without a war, which would be paying dear for the acquisition ; particularly, as Russia would infallibly support Denmark in the contest. They are planning canals, therefore, to let small vessels through, across a neck of land, by which passing Elfsneur and the castle of Cronberg would
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be avoided. But I doubt much the possibility, or at least the utility of the measure. The Danes, however, are very jealous of it; and one who resides in Count Bernstorff's family was sent over to inspect the ground, and to see if the attempt was practicable.

S E C T. II.

Connection with France.

FRance, since the late revolution, considers Sweden as one of its surest allies. The French themselves have very imprudently said, that they keep the Turks and Swedes, like two wild beasts in their dens, to be let loose for the purpose of fighting, whenever they think proper. The connection between the two countries is maintained by various circumstances.

1. By a mutual jealousy, if not hatred of Russia.
2. By the interest that France took, and the assistance it gave the present King, in effecting the late revolution.
3. By means of a Swedish regiment which France has in its service, into which many of the first of the Swedish nobility go, when they are young, by way of military education.
4. By giving great encouragement to Swedish officers who enter into their service, either by *sea* or *land*, not only giving them

them half-pay, but also the ribbon of the order *De Merite Militaire*, which was purposely instituted, to encourage and induce foreign Protestants, to engage in their service; the Knights of that order taking no oath that the most rigid Protestant could object to. Nay, France is so politic, that, besides their own ribbons and half-pay, the ambassador of that Court makes a point of recommending any officer who has behaved well in their service so strongly at home, that they are sure of promotion; and I saw some of them decorated with the Swedish as well as the French order of military merit, for their services to France.

5. Almost all the Swedes of any fashion, both male and female, speak the French as well as their mother-tongue, and are perpetually making allusions to the language and customs of France; for instance, calling the young Prince, *Notre Dauphin*, &c. &c. Many of the nobility also are educated in France; and all who can afford it travel into that country.

6. France keeps the only ambassador at the Court of Stockholm; a matter of mighty consequence with a monarch so fond of show as the present King of Sweden. All the other powers keep only ministers, and *charges des affaires*.

I was fortunate enough to get a pretty accurate account of the expences of France in that country, whether of a naval, military, or diplomatic nature.

Expences

Expences of FRANCE in SWEDEN.

	<i>Livres.</i>
To the ambaffador, for his perfonal expences,	100,000
For keeping up a table of 40 covers, -	30,000
To a <i>fecretaire de legation</i> , - -	8,000
For the poor, - - - -	600
	Liv. 138,600
For two under fecretaries, - -	1,000
Pens, ink, paper, - - - -	1,200
In Sterling, L. 5,866.	Liv. 140,800
Penfions to naval and military officers, -	24,500
	Liv. 165,300
The Swedifh ambaffador at Paris receives from the	
King of France, - - - -	25,000
In Sterling, L. 7927.	Total, Liv. 190,300

This is befides any fubfidy to the Crown, and perhaps occasional pecuniary donations to perfons of power and confequence in the country. But it is aftonifhing what weight the expenfiture of fo fmall a fum as L. 8000 *per annum* gives to France in Sweden.

The perfons fent by France to Sweden as ambaffadors, have in general confiderable property of their own, in addition to what they

they receive from their sovereign. They are obliged to be at great expence to keep up the dignity of their country, to secure partizans at the Court of Stockholm, and to procure information. The present ambaffador (Le Marquis de Pons) has the largest private hotel in Stockholm, which was intended for the Princess-Royal. He gives his phyfician 1000 livres *per annum*, which is reckoned a great falary there : but he takes care to give it to the King's own phyfician. His entertainments are very magnificent; but he complains that the Swedes do not affociate with him. In fact, they are very poor, and very prudent. The richeft man in the country (Baron Geer) has not L. 5000 Sterling a-year. Count Ferfen, the fecond in point of wealth, has only L. 3000. Very few have L. 2000 *per annum*; and therefore they very properly resolve not to fet themselves on a footing, or to keep company with one, who, in addition to his own private fortune, receives L. 6000 *per annum* from his fovereign.

There is one expence which the Court of France began at the late revolution, and which it cannot well get rid of. When the Count de Creux (the Swedish Minifter at Paris at the time) announced that important event, the King of France, to exprefs the joy it gave him, immediately declared him an ambaffador, fent him home in one of the royal coaches, and ordered 25,000 livres *per annum* to be paid him, to fupport that dignity, in addition to his allowance from Sweden. The Count was foon afterwards recalled; but this appointment or penfion was continued until his death, for this very good reafon, that the King of Sweden had nominated him his prime minifter. Upon his death, this penfion, or additional allowance, would probably have gone to the Baron de Stael, had he not been only a minifter, and not an ambaffador. It was neceffary, however,

ever, to make him an ambassador, (and consequently he would have had some claim to the pension), in order that he might be on a footing of marrying Mademoiselle Necker, who, having rejected generals, could not expect the King's consent to a connection with any person of an inferior rank. Stael was so enriched with this marriage, getting, it is said, L. 80,000 on his wedding-day, that he has declined accepting of the allowance; and it is supposed that young Count Ferfen receives it, whose father is the most powerful man in Sweden, and who himself was a great favourite at the Court of France. It is amazing the effect which these little pensions have in Sweden. The elder Count Ferfen himself condescends to receive, under the name of half-pay, 1000 livres, or L. 41, 10s. Sterling *per annum*. The French, at the same time, take care to distribute these sums in a very politic manner, disguising them as much as possible under the pretence of half-pay, or of rewards for services done, &c. &c. so as not to hurt the feelings of a proud, and spirited, though a poor people.

It is at present much questioned, whether France pays Sweden any *subsidy*. The former treaty of subsidy, made after the late revolution, has expired, and there has been none made public since. The Danes assert, that Sweden receives 2,000,000 of livres *per annum*, to be laid out on its navy, under stipulations of furnishing France with ships or seamen when called upon. But it is impossible that so large a sum could be given, and indeed no ship of the line has been built this year, (*anno* 1786), though by way of a bravado, and to show what they could do, four seventy-fours were actually built, and launched *anno* 1785. They build however so cheap, in consequence of the great skill and abilities of that inimitable constructor Chapman, that four seventy-fours would not cost them above L. 100,000 Sterling, including

cluding hulls and rigging. But to return to the subsidy. The King having got the monopoly of brandy and spirits, of course imported a considerable quantity of spirits from France; and it was said, that his subsidy was paid in that commodity. But I found that idea was without foundation: for, when Sir Thomas Wroughton, our minister, at my desire, suggested to the minister of finance, Monf. de Liliencrantz, a plan of purchasing for the use of Sweden the smuggled spirits seized in England, and which parliament has very absurdly ordered to be staved, or totally destroyed, he immediately, with great eagerness, grasped at the idea, and entered into it so keenly, that he proposed sending a ship directly to England, which he would never have done, had the Court of France supplied them with that article for nothing. Though appearances are kept up, yet the King of Sweden is not at all well at the Court of *Versailles*, or with any of the parties into which it is divided. The Queen of France dislikes him for some imprudent speeches he dropt respecting her, which she either heard herself, or which were reported to her. He certainly said in a public company, "that she had grown too fat, to be any longer accounted a beauty;" and having one day sung in his company, in order to display her vocal accomplishments, (which, it is said, are very fine); when his opinion was asked, he very coldly replied, "that he never relished any singing but upon the stage." The Queen, it is said, by leaving him out of her parties, and other slights, took care to show her resentment. Vergennes and he, also, had very serious quarrels. Each of them arrogated, the entire merit and glory, of the late revolution in Sweden, to himself; and Vergennes was so much irritated with the King's speeches upon that occasion, that if he did not take away, he at least diminished the subsidy to Sweden when he became prime minister. The King of Sweden's last journey to *Paris* was in hopes of recovering his former subsidy,

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and oversetting the minister. And when his journey to England this summer (*anno* 1786) was talked of almost with certainty, the French ambassador at Stockholm said, that he was convinced the King would not go to France, as his reception there would not be very cordial. All these circumstances convince me that he receives no subsidy at this time, or at least that it is very ill paid. Indeed the French very wisely take care to keep all subsidies to foreign powers as much in arrear as possible, so as to preserve some hold over those whose friendship they have purchased. On the whole, France likes the reputation of having such an ally, and in case of real necessity, has laid the foundation of getting its assistance on as easy terms as possible. But it knows well, that it is so checked by Russia and Denmark, that its aid cannot be much depended upon, unless at an expence, in all probability, beyond any advantage to be derived from it.

As for the last treaty between the two Courts, Sweden has got the little rock or island of St Bartholemew in the West Indies, of no great value or importance, and France has stipulated for the privilege of building a naval magazine at Gothenbourg. But as yet no step towards that object has been taken. It was at one time intended. But the French demanded that all goods should be admitted duty free, and without inspection. This the Swedes refused, justly apprehending that it would become a magazine of smuggled goods. It is very difficult, however, to discover what was the real intention of the Court of Versailles in making the treaty, as it is in general the policy of that Court, and was particularly so during Vergennes' administration, to cover their real designs with clouds of negotiation, that the objects they have actually in view, might become the more mysterious and impenetrable.

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S E C T. III.

Character of the King.

THIS monarch, like every other one, is variously talked of. I shall first state the defects and the vices of which his enemies accuse him, and next those accomplishments and virtues which his friends assert he possesses. By blending the two together, and taking a little from both, his real character may be estimated.

His enemies, in the first place, accuse him of *intemperance in drinking*, in which I understand he occasionally indulges himself to excess ; but he is not yet an habitual drunkard.

They ridicule him much for his *vanity*, in particular for imitating, because his name is Gustavus, his renowned ancestors, Gustavus Vasa, and Gustavus Adolphus. This is certainly a laudable ambition, had he not extended it to such trifles, fitting in the attitude in which Gustavus Adolphus is drawn, and the like. It is a strong proof of vanity, that when he mounted to the top of the steeple of St Catherine's at Stockholm, he wrote his name, and the date of that important event. The precious characters are carefully covered with a plate of copper, and unlocked to be shown to strangers as a mighty curiosity. His courtiers flatter this weakness so much as to have persuaded him, that he is a man possessed of abilities too transcendent to be confined

finer within so narrow, cold, and remote a country as Sweden, and that he is fitter than any sovereign now existing, to govern a great and a powerful empire, and to hold in his hands alone, the balance of Europe.

The next point they charge him with, is *extravagance*. He is certainly inclined to spend much more than the revenues of so poor a kingdom as Sweden can afford. He immerses himself in all kind of expences. Some useful, like those at Carlscrona; others perfectly unnecessary, such as the most elegant, though not the largest opera-house in Europe. It cost above L. 150,000, and the actors he keeps, the decorations, &c. come to an enormous sum *per annum*, which the prudent and rigid Swedes grudge mightily. To reconcile the nation as much as possible to this expence, he composed the outlines of a lyric tragedy, (which another put into verse), in praise of one of their favourite heroes, Gustavus Vasa, and I am told that it has an admirable effect upon the theatre, and is one of the most magnificent spectacles that can be seen. Opposite to the new opera, he is building a palace for his sister, to answer it in point of size and form, and there is to be a handsome stone-bridge over the river, in the center, to open an easy communication between the royal palace and the great square. The number of royal palaces in Sweden are very great. Besides the large one in Stockholm, another at Droningholm, for a summer-palace, a third at Gripsholm for an occasional winter-residence, there are others at Upsala, &c. He keeps 275 horses in his stables at Stockholm only. In short, it is altogether too great an establishment for so small a kingdom.

He is also *unguarded and imprudent*, both in his words and actions. As to the first, some instances have been already given.

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With regard to the latter, he is very apt to be hasty in his resolutions. He is not very old himself, and his counsellors are all young. The diet (1786) was hastily resolved on, and as hastily dissolved; and the speech at the dissolution was so very violent, that the King found it absolutely necessary to soften it before it was printed. The obnoxious passages however still remain deeply engraven in the minds of many of the hearers, and will not easily be forgotten.

He also makes a very cold husband to a very amiable Queen, who, though rather plain in her person, and a *Dane*, and consequently of a nation he cordially dislikes, yet is intitled to very different usage.

I shall now delineate this monarch's character in the favourable light in which it is represented by his friends.

The King has ever shown a sincere and hearty desire to render his country flourishing. Every useful attempt, of a public nature, he warmly patronizes. He encourages learned men of all professions. To those who conspicuously distinguish themselves by their literary labours he gives the offices they are entitled to expect, as the best professorships in the different universities, and sometimes the order of *Vasa*, as in the case of *Thunberg*, who had been in *Japan*. By his attention and encouragement he has also reared some tolerable painters; and *Sergle*, who is employed and maintained by him, is an excellent statuary.

He is attentive, as every wise king ought to be, to keep up his naval and military forces on the best footing. He has once more roused the warlike spirit of the Swedes, which had sunk very low indeed during his father's reign. Their last campaign against
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the King of Prussia was peculiarly disgraceful, with an army of 20,000 men making no progress against a small body of militia and invalids. The Swedish troops, however, are now in very different order. Its fleet is also formidable, in consequence of the great abilities and exertion of that excellent constructor, Chapman, who is unquestionably at the very top of his profession.

There is no man more insinuating when he chuses it, or who can behave in a more affable and engaging manner to strangers. In point of *general knowledge* also, there are very few of his subjects on a footing with him. His pretensions to eloquence stand high for a sovereign, and his oratorical talents were of great service to him at the last revolution, and still render him popular with the people at large. His enemies however contend, that he ought to be called a *parleur* and not an *orateur*.

His behaviour to England during the last war varied. At first, he did not at all relish the American rebellion. He said it was the common cause of sovereigns to check such attempts: and I am convinced that were there a rebellion in Ireland, he would lend us troops to quell it, who might be transported into that island from Gothemburgh, with great speed and little difficulty. His tone, however, by the machinations of France, soon altered. At his famous interview with the Empress of Russia in Finland, *anno* 17 , he spoke a very different language; and I know it from the very best authority, that he then expressed great satisfaction that England was likely to be humbled. He was also the great promoter of the Armed Neutrality, and actually proposed it to Russia a year before it really took place. It is proper at the same time to remark, that he permitted as many of his subjects as desired it, to go into our service, and several thousand natives of Sweden, during the last war, were on board

board of our fleet and merchantmen. This is an immense advantage which England enjoys. For all the common failors in the northern kingdoms prefer the English to the French service, (with the officers it is in general otherwise), and a great number of them might be procured for very little money, to mix with our own failors, should their number be too scanty for manning our ships completely. The greater part of those failors also are able seamen, and in general understand a little of the English language.

S E C T. IV.

The King's Ministers and Favourites.

THE King has not been very happy in his choice of ministers. The first, Le Comte de Creux, was a drunken profligate fellow, and sometimes really mad. After his death there was a species of ministerial interregnum for some months, till at last the young Count d'Oxenstierna was appointed. He seems to be a plain modest young man, better qualified for a private than for a public life, so that every body was astonished at the choice. But the King pitched upon him, partly because his character was unexceptionable, and partly on account of a remote connection with the Royal Family. Perhaps he also wishes to have all the credit of being his own minister; or recollecting that his great ancestor Gustavus Adolphus had a chancellor, Oxenstierna, whose memory is still revered in Sweden, he naturally thought that one of the same name and family would be popular with the people. Liliencrantz, the minister of finance, is an able man, fruitful in expedients, and attentive to his department,

ment, but like all instruments of taxation, very unpopular. *Baron d'Armfelt*, his personal favourite, is weak, contemptible, and detested. He has the care of the opera, which is an employment fit enough for him. But the public cannot bear that such an upstart should always be the King's companion, ride with him alone in his phaeton, and meet with all the countenance he receives.

S E C T. V.

Opposition in the last Diet, (1786).

Nothing could be more firm and unanimous than the opposition that the King met with at the last diet, particularly on the part of the nobles and the peasants. The opposition was headed by Count Fersen, who, on account of his estate, connections, and abilities, is reckoned the most powerful man in Sweden; and he was supported by Baron Geer, who is by far the richest person in the country. At one time the spirit of opposition had run so high, and had so much pervaded all ranks of people, even the military, that the King was in a manner totally deserted; and if Count Fersen had proposed in the diet the restoration of the old constitution, it would have infallibly taken place. But he either wanted inclination or spirit. Indeed he is so much attached to the Court of France, where his son resided at the time in high favour, that he might be afraid of taking so bold a step; and perhaps his ambition is satisfied with holding the balance between the crown and the people.

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S E C T. VI.

Foreign Ministers at the Court of Stockholm.

IN every country in Europe, with almost the single exception of England, the *Corps diplomatique* for the time being are objects of peculiar attention. They are not only of importance, as forming a part of the Court, as living with great magnificence, as carrying on the political interests of their respective countries, but also as having much to say, and being oftentimes secretly consulted respecting the administration and government of the very countries where they reside. And hence it is of very great consequence for every state to employ able men in so important a department. Those whom I saw at Stockholm, *anno* 1786, were as follows.

1. *M. Le Marquis de Pons, Ambassadeur de France.* A man of family and fashion in that country, with tolerable abilities, and a good address. But there is something on his mind which prevents him from entering much into conversation, except upon any very interesting subject. His only daughter was with him, the wife of *Le Marquis du Bois de la Motte*, from whom she is separated. She is the tallest woman I ever saw, being about six feet four inches; and her husband, it is said, is a very little man. She is not, however, ugly, except in her mind, which is so truly distorted,

distorted, that I am not surpris'd the poor Marquis should wear a discontented countenance.

2. The Spanish minister's name is *Mon. de Carrol*. It is proper to mention him next, as he affects to be constantly with De Pons, and to keep up the family-connection between the royal houses of France and Spain. He is a man with a perfect good opinion of himself, without any strong reason for indulging it. However, the little connection and intercourse that exist between Spain and Sweden, does not render an abler man at all necessary.

3. *Monr de Marcoff*, the Russian minister, is an able man, has a great deal of easy and pleasant conversation, occasionally interspersed with lively sallies of wit, and much information on the present political state of Europe. He is a warm Russian patriot, and has a high idea of the power and importance of that empire. He is much disliked by the King, and the Swedes in general, on that account, and for undervaluing, and seeming to despise, their country. He has been lately appointed the third minister in the foreign department at Peterburgh, and is likely from his connection with Count Besderadko, and his intriguing spirit and abilities, to rise at that Court. He is supposed to be a decided enemy to France, and attached to the English interest. However, his own interest in the first place, and next that of Russia, will direct his conduct as a statesman.

A curious incident happened to him when I was at Stockholm. More from vanity than from real appetite, for his state of health is very indifferent, and the lady is very plain, he took into keeping Madame Hufs, the principal French actress at Stockholm.

holm. He was very desirous of carrying her along with him to Russia, and applied for her dismissal; which was refused. One evening, (22d July), after playing before the King and Royal Family at Droningholm, she eloped. The police were immediately sent after her; and before she could get out of Sweden, she was caught, much to Marcoff's mortification. The King was enraged at it. Her absence would have stopped for some time the French comedy, which has cost him so much, at least until he could have procured another actresses. She was his contracted servant for eight years longer. It was considered as a personal insult to the King, and in the highest degree imprudent in a foreign minister to meddle with. Indeed I am convinced, that had the King of Sweden's strength and resources been equal to his spirit, he would have demanded, as satisfaction from the Court of Peterburgh, the dismissal of Marcoff from all his employments, or run the hazard of a war, to procure reparation.

4. The Danish minister, Count Juel, should be mentioned next, being as subservient to the Russian, as the Spanish is to the French ambassador. Indeed they make two separate and jealous parties, there being every where a great rivalry between France and Russia. He is a very weak and fickle man, and no body in their senses would have pitched upon such a minister. But he is brother-in-law to Mon. de Shack Rathlow, who must be gratified, by sending this fool to Stockholm.

5. Sir Thomas Wroughton, the English minister, is a native of Wiltshire. Originally bred in the mercantile line, and settled at Peterburgh, where he was appointed consul. He was in high favour with Peter III. and it is said, at that time with the present Empress. He was certainly a handsome man in his youth, and though not very deep, yet has sense enough to act his
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part in life with great propriety. He has been for many years in the diplomatic line; the greater part of which was spent as the English minister at the Court of Warsaw. He is the best liked of all the foreign ministers at Stockholm, and thence is led to indulge too favourable an idea of the friendship of Sweden towards England, deceived by the great personal civilities he meets with from persons of all descriptions.

The other branches of the *corps diplomatique* at Stockholm are not intitled to any particular attention. It is singular however to see at the Court of a Protestant Monarch, a *nuncio* from the *Pope*, who is actually received and acknowledged at Court, and is much liked by every body. The King received great civilities from his Holiness at Rome, which first brought on that diplomatic intercourse, and indeed is glad of any thing that will add to the number or splendour of his Court, or that gives the semblance of any additional consequence to Sweden.

S E C T. VII.

Disposition of the Court and Country of Sweden towards England.

THE Court seems to prefer a French, but the country in general I am convinced would relish better an English alliance. The character of the Swedes and that of the English resemble each other much, which gives all the better part of the nation a partiality for England. But what both the Court and the

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country would prefer, is a war between France and England, and the advantages of a lucrative neutrality. The day I was introduced at Droningholm, the King said to Sir Thomas Wroughton, " When shall we have another maritime war? We " long much for it in Sweden." And no wonder; for it occasions a great additional consumption of their commodities; a greater demand for them, and consequently a higher price; and an opportunity of making immense sums of money, by freighting their ships to the powers at war, and by acting as commercial agents. One of their merchants very honestly declared, that he was almost ashamed of the money he made during that *golden era* as he called it, namely, the American war. Their ships are now unemployed. The exchange is turning again greatly against them, and their specie is going fast out of the country. In short, they are again getting into very great distress.

It is proper to remark, that both the Danes and the Swedes are very jealous of the attempts of the English to monopolize the East-India trade, and unless they are permitted to have a share in it, we may have other enemies in that part of the world to contend with, besides the French.

S E C T. VIII.

Conduct of England to Sweden.

THE King has a great desire to see England, and assembled the last diet (which had nearly proved so fatal a step to him) in order to procure money for making the journey. It is said,

said, that he has also a strong desire to be made a knight of the Garter, and in particular to see an installation, in which, and in his taste for shows, he might be gratified. When in England, I am persuaded that an advantageous treaty of commerce might be made with him. At any rate, we might secure an absolute neutrality in war, and full liberty to his subjects to enter on board our fleet. Indeed that kind of assistance (*a supply of seamen*) is the very thing we should wish for, as the most useful of any. If Denmark and Sweden aid us openly, we must pay them, for they cannot afford the expence themselves. It is to the full as cheap therefore, and much more manly, politic, and creditable, to have our own ships and officers, and to mingle with our own sailors a certain proportion of foreign seamen. The northern Courts would give permission, and *perhaps encouragement*, to their seamen to enter on board our fleet for a small subsidy, of perhaps L. 20,000 each *per annum*; and were that the case, I am persuaded that from 20 to 30,000 foreign sailors might be expected from Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. This resource was not sufficiently attended to during the last war; though such is the partiality of the Danish and Swedish sailors to the English service, that some who were taken prisoners during that war in our ships, rather chose to continue in captivity, than to enter on board the French fleet.

But though admitting common seamen is a politic and useful measure; yet on no earthly consideration ought any foreign officer to be received into our naval service. It is said, that the *Ardent* of 64 guns, the only ship of the line taken by the French last war, or at least that remained in their possession, was captured in consequence of the treachery of a Swedish officer; who having discovered, in our service, our private signals,
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immediately deserted to the French, and communicated them to our enemies. Any discovery of that kind is of the most dangerous nature, and ought on no account to be risked. Indeed the less experience and the less skill other nations have, the more must the naval character of the English shine on their proper element.

It is said, that Sweden, for a subsidy of L. 50,000 *per annum*, would enter into a treaty with England, Russia, and Denmark, to counterpoise the Family-compact, and to guarantee to us all our Indian and other remote possessions. This plan is worthy of serious consideration, as it would prevent a war whilst it lasted, and consequently it would be the easiest and cheapest mode of securing those possessions. That subsidy also might be paid to Sweden without any expence to this country, by the means I have already hinted at. The consumption of smuggled spirits at home being considered as an encouragement to that pernicious traffic, by the law as it now stands they are ordered to be destroyed. It would answer exactly the same purpose, were they to be exported to foreign countries. The King of Sweden would purchase L. 50,000 *per annum* of those spirits, to be sold to his subjects ; and thus, at no expence to this country, could the friendship of that monarch be secured.

As to the people of Sweden, we have advantages for securing their good wishes, which ought not to be neglected. Above sixty of the noblest and most powerful families of Sweden are of Scotch extraction, and not a little proud of their origin. Count Fersen, the most powerful man in Sweden, is properly a Macpherson. Duval, who was Landt-Marshall, or at the head of the last diet, is properly a Macdoul. The Baron de Geer, the richest of their nobles, and the second in point of influence, is of Dutch

Dutch extraction. But then all his iron, in which his wealth consists, goes to England, and naturally connects him with that country. Advantage also should be taken of the prejudices of the people, that the English and the Swedes resemble each other much in manners, spirit, and government, and that even their language was originally the same.

As to the present state of the Swedish fleet and army, the amount of its revenue, and the real extent of its commerce, Cantzler, a Saxon, in his *Memoires concernant la Suede*, has so fully and clearly explained the situation of that country in those respects, that it is sufficient to refer to him, his work being the best and most authentic political account of a country I have ever had an opportunity of examining.

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C O N C L U S I O N.

I Shall conclude with some cursory Observations on the character, manners, and government of the Swedish nation.

The character of the Swedes, particularly such as are uncontaminated by their pernicious connection with France, is a very respectable one. Their courage in war has never been doubted. They are, perhaps, more hardy than their neighbours the Danes, which may in some measure be attributed, to their living in a country, where there is more snow, and less rain, than in Denmark. They are also very ingenious and intelligent; fond of literature, and intitled to claim at least an equality with other nations for their chemical and botanical knowledge, it being difficult for any country to produce rivals to Berghman and Linnæus. Above all, they are distinguished for the prudence and morality of their private conduct, for a manly spirit of liberty, and a warm zeal for promoting the public interests of the nation.

They have many disadvantages to struggle with. Their soil is in general poor and sandy, full of stones and rocks, and naturally running to wood. Their climate is very indifferent, their summers being too hot, hardly producing any grass, and not always favourable to grain; and their winters are so severe, that they are frequently obliged to take off the straw that covers
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their own houses, to keep their cattle from starving. Were it not for the red rye, which they sow in October and reap in the August following, Sweden would have been long ago depopulated. As it is, they are hardly ever able to raise grain enough for their subsistence; and the expence of purchasing food from other countries, keeps them in perpetual poverty and dependence.

The Swedes have carried their manufactures to as great perfection as could well be expected. Their iron is perhaps the best in Europe. Their leather, hats, gloves, cabinet-work, &c. are excellent. But they can never rival England as a manufacturing nation, both from the want of natural products, (wood and iron being the only ones they have in any great perfection or abundance, their copper-ore being very poor), and because, by their northern situation, they are excluded from a commercial intercourse with other countries for so many months in the year. As it is, their trade would be very insignificant, were it not for their extensive lakes and inland navigations, and had they not the best roads of any country in Europe, England only excepted.

The government, as it is now constituted, is very defective. In England, we find it difficult enough to manage two Houses of Parliament; but in Sweden there are four: The Nobles, who alone are 700 in number, the Clergy, the Burghers, and the Peasants, or Commons*. They all consult in separate houses; and three
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* One would suppose, that the peasants were taken out of their proper sphere, when they commence legislators. But I understand that such as are sent to the Diet are, in general, shrewd and sensible men, and more intelligent than could well

of them must agree in opinion, and obtain the King's approbation, before any bill passes into a law. This is not always practicable, as there is a great deal of jealousy, and no principle of union, among the different orders. In short, as M. de Shack-Rathlow, a very able Danish minister of state, remarked to me at Copenhagen, it was very absurd in the King of Sweden, since he was about making a revolution, that he did not sweep away every remnant of the old constitution, and establish a simple monarchy in its stead. It is said that the King intended it; but finding his adherents startle at the idea, he was obliged to pursue those half-measures, which seldom answer in the end, and will probably occasion, in some future period, the restoration of the old constitution, with stricter checks on the regal authority than was ever before thought necessary.

well be supposed, considering their opportunities. None but real peasants can be elected; inasmuch that the holding of any office, whether civil or military, or being in any of the three learned professions of law, physic, or divinity, is a sufficient disqualification.



